PAGE 1

This page is a TRIPTYCH, three panels, each.   However you want to arrange them, but overlap. No dead space.

LETTERING: This is also the first time we get CAPTIONS from the SCARAB'S POV. That is, we want the captions to be a distinct edging and color, and for this to match the NO-TAIL DIALOGUE BALLOONS that will be standard for the Scarab. **In short, "Scarab-speak" is dead, and the Scarab has dialogue like everybody else**. At the same time, we should establish a separate balloon/edge for when the Scarab is "projecting" loud enough for everyone to hear it.

panel one: DAN GARRETT, surrounded by mystical lightning as thugs and robots charge him. He holds the SCARAB and says:

DAN: (big, Kirby style) KHAJI DA!
CAPTION(SCARAB):   Dan Garrett knew the words.
CAPTION(SCARAB):   Contradiction [Lacked programming]. Result [Incomplete effect].

panel two: Ted, BB gun in one hand, yelling into the Scarab in the other like it's a dead phone. Like "Why won't this damn thing work?!" Gorilla Grodd, maybe some of your other favorite villains here, attacking from behind.

TED: KHAJI DA!?
CAPTION(SCARAB): Ted Kord / necessary intelligence for purpose decode.
CAPTION(SCARAB): Problem [Booster Gold] multiverse energy overload. Additional / magic damage ...

panel three: A recap panel of Jaime, kneeling, guns pointing at him, looking up at us as he says:

JAIME: KHAJI DA!!
CAPTION(SCARAB): Jaime Reyes. First to activate full Infiltrator mode.
CAPTION(SCARAB): Query: How did HE learn the words?

PAGE 2

panel one: BIG panel. The Scarab is SMASHING it's way out of the containment bubble we saw back in #24. Flying straight at us. Shards of glass everywhere, Reachlings dodging, looking shocked. For lack of a better word -- this is the hero shot of the Scarab, smashing toward us like Superman smashing through a vault door.

CAPTION(SCARAB):   Answer: I told him.

panel two: Soldiers and Reachlings reacting as the Scarab flies through a corridor on a crackling beam of energy, superfast (maybe motion blur). It's actually taking a corner.

CAPTION(SCARAB):   Infiltrator function "KHAJI", subnotation "DA". Not a COMMAND.
CAPTION(SCARAB):   My SERIAL NUMBER.

panel three: The Scarab PUNCHES through a door, still coming at us, Reach Soldiers with guns reacting, too slow, still some motion blur.

CAPTION(SCARAB):   But I am the first <case zero> of my kind to claim it as my NAME.

panel four: The Scarab RACES like a bullet towards a kneeling Jaime, as Negotiator, other Reach Soldiers react, motion blur still a little.

CAPTION(SCARAB): First to have a FRIEND.
JAIME: (mid-sentence) -- DA!!

PAGE 3

panel only: The Scarab SLAMS into Jaime's spine. Even as Jaime is rocked by the impact, back arched, halfway to his feet, he is already half-covered in armor. His already armored arm is BLASTING one of the GUARDS. Energy spikes everywhere, Negotiator in FG (or BG depending how you block them) shading his eyes, etc.

CAPTION(SCARAB): My name = KHAJI DA.
JAIME: AGHHH!
CAPTION(SCARAB): Jaime Reyes = BLUE BEETLE!

TITLE: END GAME PART FOUR: A LITTLE HELP FROM ...
CREDITS: AS APPROPRIATE

PAGE 4

panel one: Totally armored Jaime/BLUE BEETLE -- one arm shield, the other arm blade -- slicing through Guards. Total bugnuts clusterfuck here. He just armored up in the Reach Control Center.

BB: That REALLY HURT!
SCARAB: Apologies. Next instance / fly slower.
SCARAB: (attached) Arrive postmortem Reyes.

panel two: Blue Beetle double-arm gun blasts one of the Reach Control Panels we've been looking at for a year of issues. Explosion, sparks, Reachlings running for cover.

BB: Sarcasm again. Nice.
SCARAB: Mothership command interface [58% damage].
SCARAB: Require physical access / primary communications array.

panel three: On Negotiator, returning fire, Beetle-Blasts chewing up the wall/instruments around him. Remember, Reach blasts are like lasers, Beete's are more like focused lighting.

NEGOTIATOR: RESTART THE ENGINES!!
NEGOTIATOR: DIMENSION SHIFT <u>NOW</u>!!

panel four: A Reachling hiding under a Control Panel yells back at him among flames and wreckage.

REACHLING #1: ...
REACHLING #1: We cannot restart the QUANTUM SHIFT DRIVE! SOMETHING has, has ...

panel five: Beetle, grinning at us as he PUNCHES a GUARD with one arm and SHIELDS himself from a blast with another.

BB: The word you're looking for is "HACKED."
BB: Something HACKED your Mothership's CENTRAL COMPUTER.

PAGE 5

panel one: Negotiator pointing at one of the still functioning screens with the "code" from last issue (#24) on it.

NEGOTIATOR: That code you entered into the ENGINE CONTROL!?
NEGOTIATOR: But it hasn't ACTIVATED! It's still --

panel two: BB ripping up a floor plate whole, peeling it back like a fruit rind.

BB: "Random numbers"?
BB: (attached) Totally. My school locker combo, social security number and Milagro's birthday.
SCARAB: Communications array two sublevels below.

panel three: BB dropping down into another large room with more screens, wiring, open energy conduits. Think the guts of the ship's wiring. As BB drops, CABLES snake out from the Scarab backpack, in many directions. Think Doc Ock but snakier.

BB: But it kept your attention ON ME.
BB: And off the "dead" Scarab you hooked straight into your Central Computer.

panel four: BB using his arm blasts to fend off two charging Reach Soldiers as the thirty or so CABLES from the Scarab HOOK INTO the surrounding computers. The SCARAB appears on every screen, like Oracle's face does when she hacks.

SCARAB: Earth Analogue / "Trojan Horse"
SCARAB: Variant [Reyes = Horse]
BB: You almost figured it out, Negotiator. My attack WAS a trick to get access to this ship. But not for ME.

panel five: On Negotiator, as he shock/realizes:

CAPTION(BB): "For my PARTNER."
CAPTION(BB): "THE SCARAB!"

NOTE: OFF-PANEL Dialogue balloons may work better here. Your call.

panel six: Negotiator calling Dawur. A Reachling operates the panel. Remember, the Control Center's burning, lots of smoke, sparks, etc.

REACHLING: (small) It's dismantled our computer defenses. Total access to all files and records --
NEGOTIATOR: (overlaps/wipes previous dialogue) DAWUR! RECALL THE TROOPS!
DAWUR: (electric/no tail) Not yet!

PAGE 6

On all panels here, there's smoke and haze. It may be a cool page design to weave the

same smoke pattern through all the panels, overlapping the gutter. Break frames.

panel one: Dawur and his Soldiers shield their eyes, peering into the smoke. Guns up, looking to wipe out these troublesome humans once and for all.

DAWUR: We are moments from killing the Reyes family.
DAWUR: I just cannot see --

panel two: Through smoke and haze. From behind the makeshift barrier of blasted wall and the now-burning Beetlemobile, the adults turn to look at us. Make it a real turn, a few over the shoulders, in mid-turn, very dynamic. Probably want to drop a few unconscious Reach Soldiers and La Dama agents around the ground, sprawled on the car.

In any order that suits you: Dad holding the still steaming Intergang gun, Mom holding the top of a severed STOP sign as a club. La Dama with her gun. Peacemaker holding an unconscious Reach Soldier by the uniform-front, fist raised to pound him.

DAD: -- can't see what it IS!
LA DAMA: It's BEHIND us! It landed BEHIND US --

panel three: From 3/4 high, Paco holding Brenda, as Traci steps into frame. Brenda holding her head as she wakes up.

TRACI: (small mystic font) Awaken.
PACO: -- BEHIND US somewhere! Come on, Brenda, COME ON!
BRENDA: (small) oooooo

panel four: SMALL PANEL CLOSE-UP of Brenda snapping awake, freaking out.

BRENDA: MILAGRO!? WHERE'S MILAGRO?!

panel five: Milagro, standing among the haze and smoke and ruins, looking up at us. A kid looking up to adult height.

MILAGRO: I know YOU.
MILAGRO: My brother calls you the CRAZY ONE.

PAGE 7

panel one: is a SPLASH, with panels two and three as small INSETS on the bottom of the page. This is a SPLASH of Guy Gardner stepping through the smoke, energy ring just a' cracklin' with the righteous ass-whooping he's about to unleash. Grim, nasty little grin. On his non-ring side (so we don't block the crackling energy), Milagro is next to him, turning to look at us. A similar grim little smile. Maybe arms folded "Daddy's home, and you're gonna get it, Mister Bad Guy."

GUY: That's right, baby girl.
GUY: I'm the CRAZY ONE.

panel two: CLOSE on Dawur in the FG and a REACH SOLDIER in the BG, staring, open mouthed.

panel three: Same shot. Dawur yelling, while the Reach Soldier rubs his eyes.

DAWUR: (big) ATTACK!!
SOLDIER: (tiny) We're dead.

PAGE 8

panel one: Guy flying up through the Mom/Dad/La Dama/Peacemaker line of defense. At us, but cheat the line a little so he's moving camera right to left.

GUY: Attacking these people violates the PEACE TREATY, nimrod!!
GUY: Right here, right now, I'm declaring WAR on the REACH!

panel two: Dawur, commanding his troops and those flyers we brought in last issue.

DAWUR: ONE LANTERN?! The REACH can handle ONE LANTERN!

panel three: REVEAL Ice coming in from a flank, FREEZING the guns of Reach soldiers.

ICE: Don't worry.
ICE: He brought help.

panel four: Side by side shot of Peacemaker and Guy, blasting, punching, whatever's the most dynamic. But ass-deep in Reach Soldiers.

PEACEMAKER: Heard she was dead.
GUY: Got better. Heard YOU were dead.
PEACEMAKER: Got better.
GUY: Heh.

panel five: CLOSE on Mom watching from behind some cover, EXPLOSIONS reflected in her glasses (if she still has them). Dad reloading the gun.

MOM: This -- this is what it's like.
MOM: (attached) When THEY fight.
DAD: ... You okay, sweetheart?

panel six: A moment behind the cover. Now remember, Mom's not COWERING here. She's an emergency room nurse, she's seen a lot of blood, etc. But she's processing the new experience. Probably a half-shot here, so we can pay off the small CLOSE UP on panel seven.

MOM: I just realized, Jaime does this. How does our boy DO this?
DAD: Our boy can't. But our YOUNG MAN?

panel seven: CLOSER as Mom gazes on Dad lovingly. He takes her hand in his, raises it to his lips and kisses her knuckles.

DAD: He's almost as tough as his MOTHER.

PAGE 9

panel one: Back in the Communications Room, where Blue Beetle's still hooked up by

dozens of cables to all these screens. He's formed mini-guns on each hand now, firing away, ass Reach Soldiers dive for cover, fire back.

CAPTION: Reach Mothership. Communications Array.
CAPTION(BB): Believe it or not -- up to now was the easy part.
BB: You almost done? We've only got maybe a THOUSAND MORE of these guys coming through the door.
SCARAB: Correction. 3521 Reach Security en route.
SCARAB: (attached) Satellite interface initiating.
CAPTION(BB): Now for the CLOSER.

panel two: Reachling has an image of a SATELLITE up on the screen. Negotiator reacting to it, turning.

REACHLING: Satellite uplink established.
NEGOTIATOR: Satellite? That ridiculous BAT PERSON'S SATELLITE?*
REACHLING: Signals transmitting from Central Computer to --
CAPTION: * From BB #18/TT #50 - El Joano

panel three: Negotiator grabbing the Reachling by the shirtfront.

NEGOTIATOR: You told me that the Satellite was USELESS. It couldn't DETECT our SIGNALS!
REACHLING: It CAN'T!!
NEGOTIATOR: That's why I allowed it to EXIST!
REACHLING: It just TUNED DIRECTLY to the Scarab's FREQUENCY!

panel four: CLOSE on the Negotiator tossing the Reachling away like old luggage, screaming into our face as if he's screaming into a comm panel.

NEGOTIATOR: REYES! You could not COORDINATE with this Bat-man!
NEGOTIATOR: We monitored every electronic frequency, every BANDWIDTH you could use to reach him!

panel five: CLOSE on BB looking back up the shaft he descended through, grinning

BB: I know. Scarab told me. That's why I sent a LETTER.

panel six: Negotiator reaction, not fury this time, face falling.

NEGOTIATOR: A ... letter?
BB(OFF-PANEL): Pen. Paper. Looooowtech.
BB(OFF-PANEL): Sent it off with a FRIEND.

page 10

panel one: FUZZY BORDER to show this happened ELSEWHERE/ELSEWHEN. We're in ORACLE'S BASE. Danni Garrett is eagerly explaining things, looking around, waving her hands (I really loved that head-blur you did with her in #22). Oracle is holding the opened letter, staring at Danni. All Danni's DIALOGUE BALLOONS are different sizes, overlapping, etc. so we never actually see her finish a sentence.

DANNI: The letter says TUNE INTO THIS FREQUENCY when the Mothership enters REAL

SPACE --
DANNI: Did I mention TED left me the BUG
DANNI: Hey is that a supercooled Cray
DANNI: And there was this UNDERGROUND CITY
ORACLE: ... do you know MISFIT?

panel two: On BB in the Communications Array room, floating now, fists clenched. As if pushing all the info he's sending was a physical act. Still hooked up to the computers. But on on all the screens, IMAGES of Earth, the Reach, EXPLOSIONS, maybe TOVAR, etc.

CAPTION(BB): YES!
SCARAB: Transmitting ALL INVASION PROTOCOLS.
SCARAB: (attached) Satellite decoding / downstreaming.
CAPTION(BB): No matter what happens now, I WIN.

panel three: This is probably a loose set of images rather than a panel. We want to see the invasion images from the previous panel on the different TV and COMPUTER SCREENS in the following locales. Just broad, brushtroke senses of these locations:

-- Sasha Boudreaux looking at the info on a Checkmate screen.
-- Clark Kent and Lois looking at the info on a TV screen in the DAILY PLANET newsroom.
-- Batman, from behind, in full lurky mode, looking at the images on his Bat-computer.
-- People in a DEPARTMENT STORE (give me a salesman with a tiny nametag) reacting in surprise as the images appear on multiple TV screens.

BB (OFF PANEL): Your thousands of invasion plans, Negotiator.
BB (OFF PANEL): Thanks to Batman and Oracle, on EVERY SCREEN on EARTH! No matter what you try NOW, we're READY for it!!

panel four: Same STYLE as panel three, as people react to the WORLD-RIPPERS fading into view in the tropics, in the desert in front of Bedouin, in FARMLAND, etc.

BB (OFF PANEL): I'm decloaking the World-Rippers, while I'm at it.
BB (OFF PANEL): That's GOTTA sting.

PAGE 11

panel one: The Negotiator, making a fist in frustration, as the Reachlings reports:

REACHLING #1: Multiple incoming transmissions.
REACHLING #2: Demands of clarification. Several request demands of surrender.

panel two: CLOSE on Negotiator, nasty smile.

NEGOTIATOR: ...
NEGOTIATOR (attached) Are the World-Rippers still FUNCTIONAL?

panel three: ON the Reachling working the controls, turning to talk to us.

REACHLING: Off-line, but functional.
REACHLING: They cannot initiate process. Can still receive energy.

panel four: The Negotiator running out the door of the Burning Control center. Might be

nice to use the doorframe here to show just how much damage Jaime did on his way in.

NEGOITIATOR: All remaining Security Forces. Organize between Reyes and the Engine Chamber.
NEGOTIATOR: There should be enough residual energy in the Engines to trigger the World-Rippers.

panel five: On BB reacting in shock as he hears --

NEGOTIATOR: (electric/no tail) If we cannot have Earth -- WE WILL TEAR IT APART!!

PAGE 12

panel one: CLOSE on Dawur, with various combat/laser/Ring blasts around him.

DAWUR: (small) He wouldn't --
DAWUR: Activate TELEPORT! We need to get OFF THIS PLANET!

panel two: REVERSE shot of Dawur and the Reach Soldiers, interrupted as they fall back, looking UP into the sky.

FIRE (OFF-PANEL): Pursuant to charges of conspiracy, espionage and evidence of interplanetary aggression, the United Nations Security Council demands you SURRENDER.

panel three: FIRE is descending from the sky, flames everywhere, BLASTING one of the fighters.

FIRE: If you fail to comply, the consequences will be ...
FIRE: ... well, ME.

panel four: Ice, waving cheerfully up at the off-panel FIRE. Guy's grumbling as he RING BLASTS some Reach soldiers at point blank range.

ICE: Bea is here! Neat!
GUY: >grumble<
ICE: HEYYY BEA! Over here!

panel five: Fire, her arms crossed, glares past Ice's left shoulder as Ice talks to her, happy. Guy throws Fire a sideways glance as he fights.

FIRE: I thought you were taking it slow.
ICE: We are! This isn't a date.
GUY: (super tiny font) Kind of a date.
ICE: What?
GUY: Nothing.

PAGE 13

panel one: Brenda is running, tugging Milagro along (not carrying, arm pulling). Paco is running after them, a step behind. He's still got that spiffy alien pistol he picked up from the Reach. Keep these movement panels dynamic -- hopping over wreckage, dodging laser blasts, etc.

PACO: Brenda!
BRENDA: Gotta go GOTTA GO!!
PACO: BRENDA!!

panel two: HEAD AND SHOULDERS of Paco taking Brenda by the arm from behind, Brenda turning, kind of annoyed.

PACO: I thought you were DEAD --
BRENDA: We don't have TIME for this!
PACO: -- I just realized, I just --
BRENDA: Paco, we have to get Milagro clear!

panel three: CLOSER as Brenda snaps, impatient, Paco rubs his forehead.

BRENDA: WHAT?! What are you trying to SAY?
PACO: Aw, hell.

panel four: Probably the whole bottom of the page, SPLASHY. Paco kissing Brenda. And I mean LAYING ONE ON HER. As a matter of fact, I'm sending a reference photo right now. Behind them, Explosions, fireworks, flames, etc. This is the best first kiss in battle, ever.

PAGE 14

panel one: On Milagro, looking at them, making a face. Behind her, DAWUR rounds a corner, oblivious that he's about to find them. Dawur is carrying a similar PISTOL to Paco.

MILAGRO: Ewwwww.
DAWUR: -- FLIERS to OUR POSITION!! GET --

panel two: WIDE shot of Paco leaping panel left, firing the pistol at us. Brenda leaping panel right, stretching out to push Milagro down.

PACO: MILAGRO!
BRENDA: DOWN!
SFX pistol: kzzassh

panel three: WIDER to show Brenda tumble/rolling out of the way with Milagro as Dawur RETURNS FIRE. Dawur's hit by Paco's BLAST in the RIBS.

DAWUR: GYAHG!
SFX pistol: FZAAP!

panel four: Paco s thrown back, and I mean arched back like he just took a Kirby-punch to the CHIN, as the aser-blast grazes his HEAD.

PACO: YEEAARGH!

panel five: Chest-up shot of Dawur, advancing. Looking surprised, eyes sideways as a pair of SKINNY ARMS reaches in at head height, about to grab him.

DAWUR: I am SICK and TIRED --
DAWUR: (small, attached) what?

PAGE 15

panel one: Brenda's jumped onto Dawur's head and shoulders and is beating the crap out of him. He's trying to grab her.

BRENDA: YOU!
DAWUR: AAHHH!
BRENDA: If you HURT HIM!
DAWUR: GET! OFF!!

panel two: WIDER to show Paco struggling to his feet in the FG, bloody head wound, piking up a loose BOARD with one hand. A big board, like a 2x4, a maybe four feet long. Frikkin' LUMBER. In the BG, Dawur TOSSES Brenda loose.

DAWUR: I swear I am going to KILL a HUMAN TODAY --

panel three: Paco stands and SLAMS Dawur in the knee with the 2x4, a big baseball swing. Show motion lines.

SFX impact: KRACKK!
DAWUR: AGGGHHH!!

panel four: And Paco follows up with the bg swing to the chin, knocking Dawur clean off his feet and back.

SFX impact: WACK!
DAWUR: urrrg.

panel five: From Dawur's POV (so we probably want him in the FG, on his ass, looking at Paco and Brenda). Brenda's got the alien pistol pointed at Dawur and looking kind of dead sexy, while, Paco's holding the board menacingly.

BRENDA: Hi. We haven't met. I'm Brenda.
PACO: I'm Paco.
PACO: And I am going to hit you with this STICK until you get the #&%$ OFF MY PLANET.

PAGE 16

panel one: Blue Beetle in heavy combat with a swarm of Reach soldiers. They're trying to drag him down, he's cutting through them with arm blades.

CAPTION: REACH MOTHERSHIP
CAPTION(BB):   I'm NEVER going to fight my way through this MAZE of a ship in time.

panel two: Blur the borders on this panel. Negotiator is in the Engine Room, at the Instrument Panel we established in front of the three massive energy spheres. The one we established back in #24. Hes typing intently, looking pleased with himself.

CAPTION(BB):   Negotiator's already priming the Engines. The World-Rippers will --

panel three: BB firing up his rocket pack, RACING away from startled Reach SOLDIERS,

going SIDEWAYS.

CAPTION(BB): What was it Ted wrote over and over again in those journals?

panel four: EXTERIOR Mothership hull as BB BLASTS out through it into open space.

CAPTION(BB): "Think sideways."

panel five: WIDER SHOT to show BB flying in an arc (jetpack residue) toward the big ENGINE SPHERES on the back of the ship.

SCARAB: Engine Shielding/ impact momentum[calculating]
BB: And?

panel six: BB SLAMMMING into the hull, blasting, one arm up as a shield to take the impact.

SCARAB: ... this is going to hurt.
BB: You've GOTTA stop saying thaaaAAARAGHHH
SFX impact: WHABOOOOOOM!

PAGE 17

panel one: Inside the Engine Room, Negotiator reacts as BB half flies half falls through the top of the chamber and into the room. Wreckage ans splintered metal fall with him.

NEGOTIATOR: BLUE BEETLE!
NEGOTIATOR: YOU ARE TOO LATE!

panel two: BB flying low, BLASTING the instruments closest to Negotiator. They EXPLODE with many large fragments, a fireball, etc., throwing Negotiator back.

BB: Scarab! Target the ENGINE CONTROLS!!
NEGOTIATOR: AAAGGH!
SFX blast: KA-BOOM!

panel three: On BB in the FG, examining the panel. Negotiator is sitting up, trapped in the RUBLE and WRECKAGE of the blown panel.

SCARAB: Energy buildup / continues.
BB: Hack the controls!
SCARAB: Option [negative]. Closed circuit feedback loop.
NEGOTIATOR: (small) toooo late.

panel four: BB watching as his arm forms a comples tentacle/cable arrangemnt.

SCARAB: Option / interrupt circuit.
SCARAB: Physically.
BB: Do it.

panel five: BB stabs that electronic arm into the control panel, takes a massive dose of power. Drops him to his knees. The power forms a lightning/aura around him for the rest of the scene.

BB: AAGGGGGHHHH!
SFX interface: Kzzzssshkkkzzz

panel five: CLOSE on BB, in agony.

BB: Is ... is it DONE?!
SCARAB: Negative. Must interrupt cycle until safe interval.
BB: ... what's ... safe >uhnnrrk< interval?
SCARAB: 0.5 seconds before detonation.
BB: ... so much .. for the GETAWAY ...

PAGE 18

panel one: On Negotiator, reacting. (Maybe BB in the FG here, not sure)

NEGOTIATOR: Reyes, if that energy doesn't discharge, it will BLAST this CHAMBER!!
NEGOTIATOR: We'll both DIE!

panel two: Reverse to BB, still in agony.

BB: ... if that's what it takes to save the people I love ... okay. Scarab?
SCARAB (ALOUD):   Computing.

panel three: Negotiator reacting in horror/wonder as he stares at BB.

NEGOTIATOR: I ... I can HEAR IT.
NEGOTIATOR: It's TALKING!
SCARAB(ALOUD):   Agree to stay. Reyes [friend] / Sacrifice [good].
SCARAB(ALOUD):   Scarab [HERO]

panel four: BB, still in agony, grinning at Negotiator.

BB: How do you like THAT, Negotiator?
SCARAB(ALOUD):   (small) Detonation in eight seconds.

panel five: WIDE on BB and NEGOTIATOR, as the Spheres CRACKLE with ENERGY. This is a lot of energy getting ready to go BOOM.

SCARAB(ALOUD):   Detonation in seven / six / five --
BB: Out of time.

PAGE 19

panel one: BIG panel AS BOOSTER GOLD APPEARS IN A BLUR OF LIGHT, A TIME PORTAL OF SOME SORT. He's half-standing in it. Right behind BB.

BOOSTER: Lucky for you, time is ALWAYS ON MY SIDE.
BB: BOOSTER GOLD?!

panel two: Booster pulls BB back through the time portal. BB reaches out to us.

BOOSTER: Come on, Jaime! Last second!!
BOOSTER: LITERALLY!!
BB: We can't leave him!
BB: (attached) Negotiator! TAKE MY HAND!!

panel three: Negotiator, looking at us, in wonder, maybe some snarky regret.

NEGOTIATOR: ...
NEGOTIATOR: (small) We never stood a chance.

panel four: WIDE to show the time portal BLINKING out of existence, Negotiator still in the wreckage. Even more ENERGY CRACKLING.

Negotiator: Heh. heh heh ...
SFX portal: bwiip
SFX ENERGY: vvrrrrRRRMMMMMMMMMM --

panel five: Exterior of the Mothership, as the REAR PODS of the ship FLARE with energy and explosions. Not enough to destroy it, of course. But enough to know there's nobody getting out of the engine sphere.

SFX: -- MMM (HUGE) BOOOOMM!

PAGE 20

panel one: Back on Earth. Mom and Dad are fine but frantic, talking to Guy and Peacemaker.

MOM: Is there ANY WORD?
GUY: My RING'S SENSES all messed up from some sort of EXPLOSION.
MOM: Oh GOD. Please, try to call him AGAIN.

panel two: Booster strolling out fo the time portal, his arm around Blue Beetle.

BOOSTER: Hey! Anybody lose one slightly singed, scruffy knock-off hero?

panel three: Side by side, Mom and Dad react to Jaime, while Ice and Fire (and Guy) react to Booster.

MOM: JAIME!
FIRE: BOOSTER?!
ICE: YOU'RE ALIVE?!

panel four: BIG. BB hugging his family. Big hug for Mom, Milagro doing the waist wrap around, Dad with an arm around his neck, kissing his head. If you have room in the back, Ice hugging Booster while Guy talks to him. But center stage is the family reunion.

CAPTION(JAIME): Wow. Wow.
CAPTION(JAIME): This feels ... REALLY GOOD.

PAGE 21

panel one: (This is a crowded page, so it may be best to go pretty griddy here.) Panel one is Guy face to face with DAWUR, some REACH SOLDIERS behind Dawur. The RING is making an EXIT sign, pointing straight up.

CAPTION(JAIME): In the end, Dawur claimed Negotiator "went rogue". Nobody wanted a war, so Guy had to cut them loose.
CAPTION(JAIME): He made it pretty clear what'd happen if he saw them again, though.

panel two: Jaime is in the desert, looking up at the night sky.

CAPTION(JAIME): I felt bad the other Scarabs were taken away on the Reach Mothership. Until my Scarab told me he'd had a "secret talk" with his "brothers".
CAPTION(JAIME): I swear it kind of chuckled.

panel three: ESTABLISHING of the Reyes house being rebuilt, some empty framing, some walls already up. A sign reads "CONSTRUCTION BY EL PASO DESERT HOMES", under which smaller lettering reads: "A subsidiary of Wayne Enterprises."

CAPTION(JAIME): Our insurance covered the house.
CAPTION(JAIME): Or so the nice men in suits claimed.

panel four: Backyard barbecue. EVERYBODY is here. Focus in this shot, though, on Dad and Mom at the Barbecue, serving Peacemaker some burgers while Peacemaker chugs a beer. Mom laughs.

CAPTION(JAIME): Everybody came out for the new housewarming.

panel five: At the Barbecue, close on Brenda and Paco avoiding each others' eyes. Like the first awkward moment you did with them, back in #14. If you can slam Hector and Nadia in the BG, aces.

CAPTION(JAIME): Everybody seems okay.
BRENDA: So ...
PACO: Heat of the moment.
BRENDA: Yeah.
PACO: Never --
BRENDA: -- happened. Sure.

panel six: Booster Gold (everyone's in civilian clothes), Ice, Fire and Guy are in a discussion. All have beers/pops.

FIRE: I was the just closest CHECKMATE operative.
BOOSTER: Hey, I decided to check in on the kid, total spur of the moment.
GUY: Bats. Bats is playin' some sort of mindgame.

CAPTION(JAIME): In the end, they decide it was just LUCK that THEY were the ones who saved me.
CAPTION(JAIME): And Booster's decided he's my "super-buddy." Yikes.

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panel only: Jaime is sitting on his picnic table, holding a pop, grinning at us. Behind him, his parents, his friends, the SUPERHEROES are all enjoying the barbecue. Milagro's

standing on the table, OOO-ing as Fire makes a little flame-horse for her. Traci 13 laughing at something off-camera, one hand on Jaime's shoulder as if she's about to lean in for a kiss. Brenda with a finger up, lecturing Paco, but they're both smiling. Really cram as many of those people in the BG as you can, multiple levels. multiple planes -- just a nice shot that everyone's okay, and happy and chatting away. Nobody's looking at Jaime. A little private moment.

CAPTION(JAIME): As for me? I'm the third Blue Beetle. And I KNOW there will be a fourth. And a fifth. On and on.
CAPTION(JAIME): Some better, some worse. But the STORY, the NAME, the HERO? That'll go on forever. Past me. Past us ALL.
CAPTION(JAIME): And I think that's kind of cool.